



BATMAN'S 30TH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE



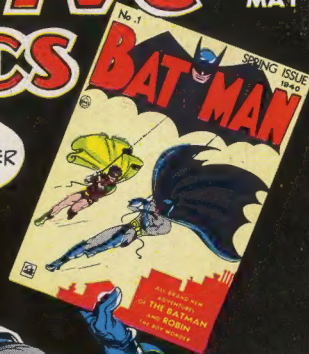
NO. 387
MAY

12¢

Detective COMICS



WELL, ROBIN...
READY FOR ANOTHER
30 YEARS?



YOU
BET!

AND SO
ARE WE!



Sorry, the rest of you kids who don't do a lot of vine swinging, giant killing, arrow shooting, elephant trampling, and sky flying.

You have to earn the award the regular way.

You have to get in shape and try out for the President's All America Physical Fitness Team at school.

Don't worry.

You don't have to fly or be invincible or anything like that. You just have to be able to run, jump, pull-up, sit-up and throw a softball.

Every kid has the same chance to make the President's

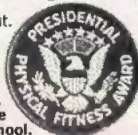
Team regardless of size, sex or shape.

If you make the team, you win this badge from the President.

Every boy and girl 10 to 17 can try out.

The kids in the photo below don't have to.

For information, talk to your physical education teacher or write President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, Washington, D.C. 20201. **Try out for the President's Physical Fitness Team at school.**



An honorary Presidential physical fitness award to the following boys and girls.

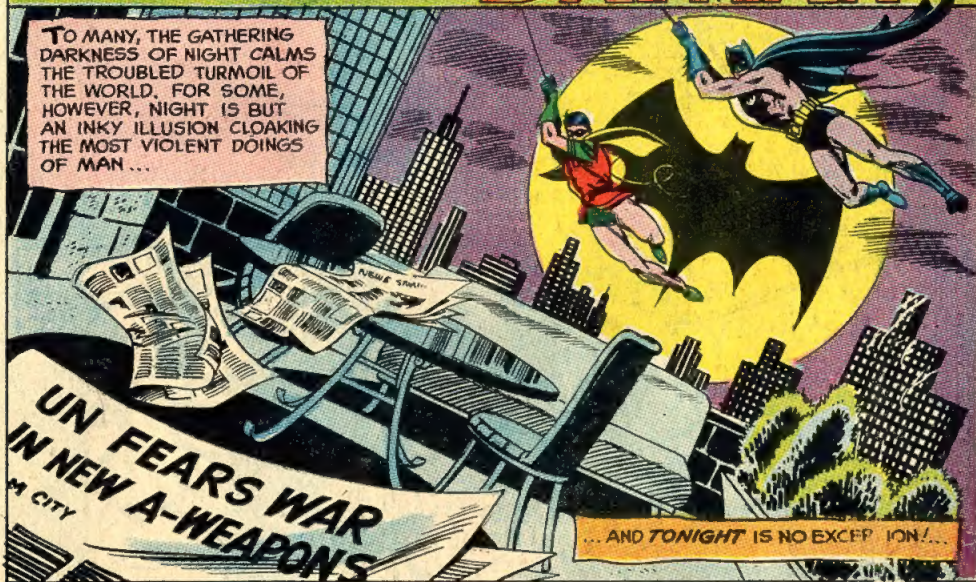


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CELEBRATING THE
30th Anniversary
 OF THE VERY FIRST
 APPEARANCE OF --

BATMAN

TO MANY, THE GATHERING DARKNESS OF NIGHT CALMS THE TROUBLED TURMOIL OF THE WORLD. FOR SOME, HOWEVER, NIGHT IS BUT AN INKY ILLUSION CLOAKING THE MOST VIOLENT DOINGS OF MAN ...



TONIGHT'S SEETHING SILENCE WITNESSES TWO OF GOTHAM CITY'S NIGHT-CREATURES...



AS THEY ONCE MORE DAUNTLESSLY FACE THE NIGHT'S DARK DESTINY...

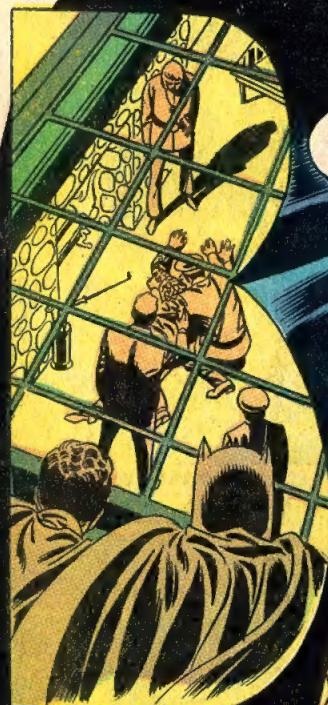


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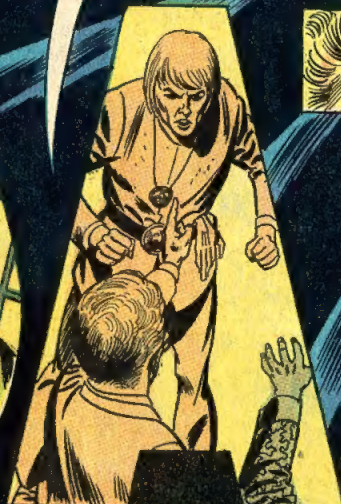
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STORY: MIKE FRIEDRICH



THE EVIDENCE IS CLEAR,
YOUNG MAN --YOUR FATHER
HAS BEEN MURDERED--

--AND **YOU** WERE
FOUND WITH THE
VICTIM--



THE CRY OF
NIGHT IS--

2

ART: BOB BROWN AND JOE GIELLA



-- THE WEAPON HAS
YOUR FINGERPRINTS
ON IT--

I'M TAKING YOU
IN AND BOOKING
YOU FOR MURDER!

NO WAY--
COMMISSAR!



YOU FUZZY-WUZZIES
THINK JUST 'CAUSE YOU'VE
GOT A GUN YOU CAN GO
AROUND AND HASSLE
ANYONE YOU FEEL
LIKE! WELL, I'M
NOT LETTIN' YA--!



SUDDEN
DEATH!"

"LISTEN, YOUNG MAN, YOU WERE
CAUGHT IN THE ACT--"

WHY, MASTER MEL--

HUH?

MAN, YOU'VE BEEN
RAPPING ME WITH
A PILE OF STUFF
THAT MEANS
NOTHING--

ALLOW ME
TO BE THE
JUDGE OF
THAT--

BATMAN!
THEN YOU
DID GET MY
SIGNAL--

NOW IT REALLY
LOOKS LIKE
"BIG BROTHER
AND THE
HOLDING
COMPANY"!!

HA! YOU
PROBABLY
DON'T EVEN
APPRECIATE
THE GAG!

WELL, I
DON'T THINK
JANIS
JOPLIN
WOULD
APPRECIATE
BEING CALLED
"BATTY"
EITHER--

HA! SO BRUCE
HAS BEEN
GETTING AN
EARFUL OF
MY JANIS
RECORDS!

COULD YOU
FILL US IN ON EXACTLY
WHAT'S COMING
OFF HERE,
COMMISSIONER
GORDON?

THIS--THIS PARODY OF
A GENTLEMAN IS MEL
LAMBERT! THE VICTIM OF
THE CRIME IS HIS FATHER,
AN ATOMIC CHEMIST.

THIS EVENING WE
RECEIVED A CALL
FROM THE LAMBERT
BUTLER--

WHEN THE POLICE COMMISSIONER HAS FINISHED REVIEWING THE EVIDENCE...

... AND EVER SINCE WE ARRIVED, YOUNG LAMBERT HAS DONE NOTHING BUT TREAT US TO ARROGANT LANGUAGE AND THREATENING STATEMENTS--

MAN, I'M JUST TELLING IT LIKE IT *IS* --IT'S JUST, LIKE, YOU'VE BECOME SO WARPED BY THE **SYSTEM** YOU JUST CAN'T DIG IT--

WHY, YOU PUNK-- I OUGHT TO--

ROBIN, NO--

YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO SOLVE ANYTHING BY BEING IMPULSIVE! LET'S PLAY IT COOL AND USE A LITTLE **REASON!**

THAT'S 'CAUSE I HAVEN'T **TOLD YA, BAT-GUY!**

WE HAVEN'T HEARD *YOUR* VERSION OF WHAT OCCURRED!

LIKE I SAID TO THE COMMISSH, I CYCLED IN TO SEE MY OLD MAN AND SOME STRANGE CAT JUMPED ME! I CAME TO AND FOUND THE OLD MAN DEAD! THAT'S WHEN THE BUTLER SHOWED!

SO YOU'VE GOT A MOTORCYCLE?

THAT'S RIGHT--

I ASSUME YOU WERE WEARING THOSE GLOVES WHEN YOU CAME IN! MAY I SEE THEM?

DRAWING A HIGH-POWERED MAGNIFYING GLASS FROM HIS **UTILITY BELT**, THE **COWLED CRIME-BUSTER** METHODICALLY INVESTIGATES UNTIL...

MEL COULDN'T HAVE USED THIS MURDER-POKER, COMMISSIONER--THERE ARE NO TRACES, CHEMICAL OR OTHERWISE, OF HIS RIDING GLOVES ON IT!

THEREFORE, HIS FINGERPRINTS COULD HAVE BEEN ON THE **POKER BEFORE-HAND!**

BUT WHAT'S TO SAY HE DIDN'T USE THE **POKER** WITH HIS **GLOVES ON?**

NOTHING-- BUT YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO **PROVE** IT!

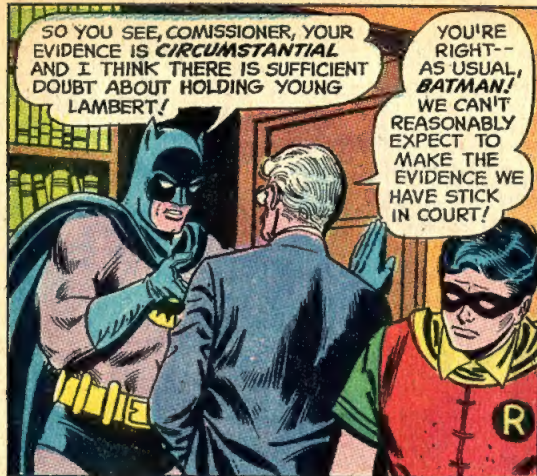
WE CAN MAKE A STRONG CASE AGAINST HIM! HE WAS THE ONLY ONE **HERE!** THE BUTLER SAW NO ONE ELSE ENTER, AND THERE'S **NO OTHER WAY** TO GET IN!

NOT SO, COMMISSIONER! FOLLOW ME--!

SEE-- BEHIND THIS BOOKCASE--

WHY, THAT DOOR HASN'T BEEN USED IN **YEARS!** LIKE I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN IT **EXISTED!**

WELL, **SOMEONE** KNEW IT-- BECAUSE THIS IS WHERE **WE** ENTERED! IT WAS PARTIALLY **OPEN** WHEN WE ARRIVED--INDICATING SOMEONE LEFT HERE IN A HURRY!



SO YOU SEE, COMMISSIONER, YOUR EVIDENCE IS **CIRCUMSTANTIAL** AND I THINK THERE IS SUFFICIENT DOUBT ABOUT HOLDING YOUNG LAMBERT!

YOU'RE RIGHT-- AS USUAL, **BATMAN!** WE CAN'T REASONABLY EXPECT TO MAKE THE EVIDENCE WE HAVE STICK IN COURT!



BETTER A GUILTY MAN GO FREE THAN TO JAIL SOMEONE INNOCENT!

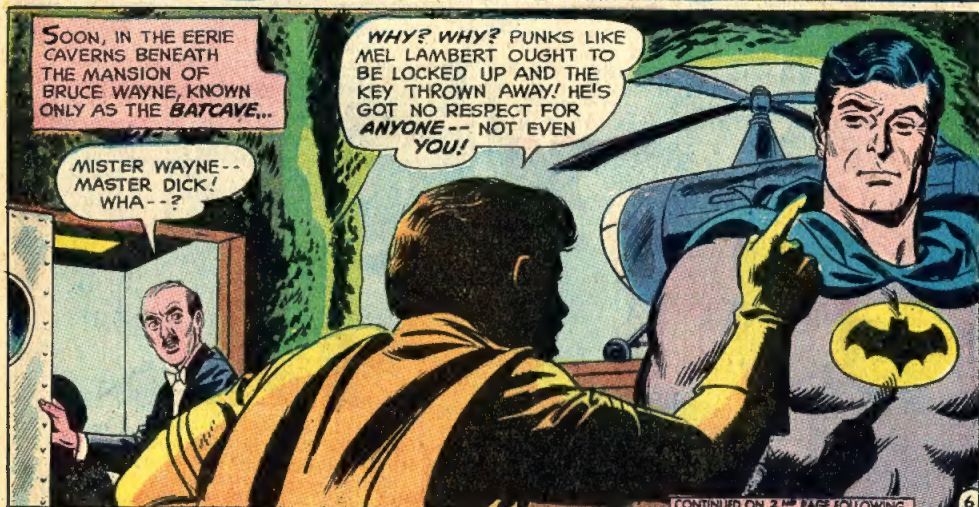
BUT SAY, IF THIS ENTRANCE WAS **UNKNOWN, BATMAN,** HOW'D YOU--?



--GONE! I'VE WORKED WITH **BATMAN** FOR YEARS-- AND I **STILL** CAN'T GET USED TO HIS **MYSTERIOUSNESS!**



LET ME LAY **THIS** ON YA, GORDY-- THIS WHOLE SCENE IS ONE BIG BUMMER, BUT I DON'T HAFTA HACK IT, SO I'M **SPLITTIN'!**



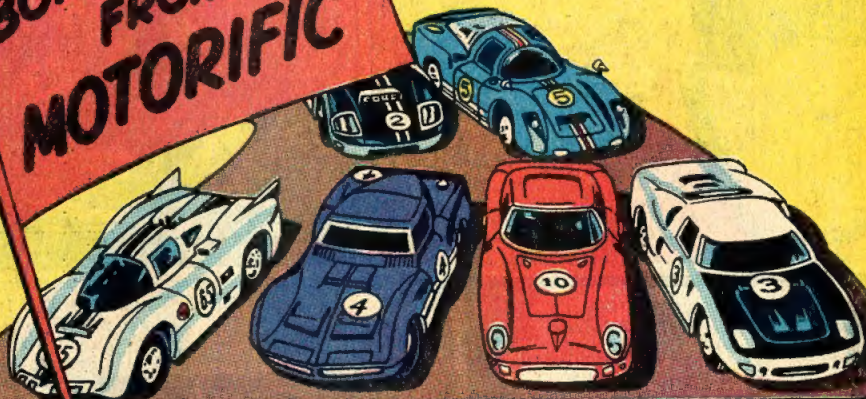
SOON, IN THE EERIE CAVERNS BENEATH THE MANSION OF BRUCE WAYNE, KNOWN ONLY AS THE **BATCAVE...**

MISTER WAYNE-- MASTER DICK! WHA--?

WHY? WHY? PUNKS LIKE MEL LAMBERT OUGHT TO BE LOCKED UP AND THE KEY THROWN AWAY! HE'S GOT NO RESPECT FOR **ANYONE--** NOT EVEN **YOU!**

**FLASH!
BONUS OFFER
FROM
MOTORIFIC®**

**BUY ANY OF THESE
HOT MOTORIFIC RACING
CARS AND GET A
RACE TRACK ATTENDANT
...RIGHT IN THE PACKAGE!**



BACK ROW: FORD J / PORSCHE CARRERA 6
FRONT ROW: CHAPARRAL / MAKO SHARK / FERRARI 250 / FORD MARK II.

SIGNAL MAN

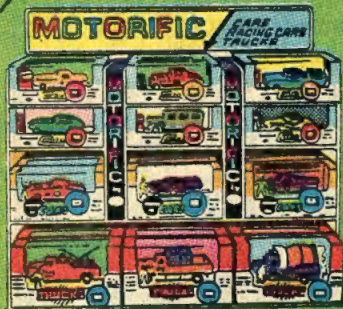
FIREMAN • MECHANIC • ATTENDANT • TRACKMAN • FLAGMAN



**EACH SET COMES WITH THE RACER
OF YOUR CHOICE, THE NEW BONUS
ATTENDANT, AND A HIGH-TORQUE
MOTORIFIC MOTOR.**



**LOOK FOR THIS MOTORIFIC DISPLAY
CENTER AT YOUR FAVORITE TOY STORE
NOW!**



**IT'S MOTORIFIC, IT'S EXTRA
EXTRA TERRIFIC... IT'S**

IDEAL



IF IT WEREN'T FOR GUYS LIKE YOU, HE COULDN'T EVEN WALK THE **STREETS** AT NIGHT!

LIKE I'VE BEEN SAYING, OUR JOB IS TO PROTECT THE RIGHTS OF **EVERYONE**, NOT THOSE WE JUST HAPPEN TO LIKE!

NOW LET'S GO-- IT'S GOING TO BE A LONG NIGHT--

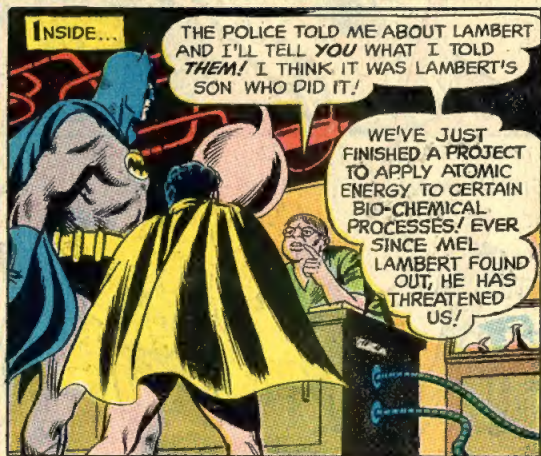


--AND WE'VE GOT A KILLER TO FIND!



THE **BAT-COMPUTER** "KNEW" THAT LAMBERT WAS A MEMBER OF A SYNDICATE ENGAGED IN IMPORTANT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH, ALONG WITH THREE OTHERS-- STEVEN CRANE, PAUL ROGERS, AND ALFRED STRYKER!

IT APPEARS THE FIRST OF THEM IS ANOTHER NIGHT-BIRD! CRANE'S LIGHT IS STILL ON IN HIS LAB!



INSIDE...

THE POLICE TOLD ME ABOUT LAMBERT AND I'LL TELL **YOU** WHAT I TOLD **THEM**! I THINK IT WAS LAMBERT'S SON WHO DID IT!

WE'VE JUST FINISHED A PROJECT TO APPLY ATOMIC ENERGY TO CERTAIN BIO-CHEMICAL PROCESSES! EVER SINCE MEL LAMBERT FOUND OUT, HE HAS THREATENED US!

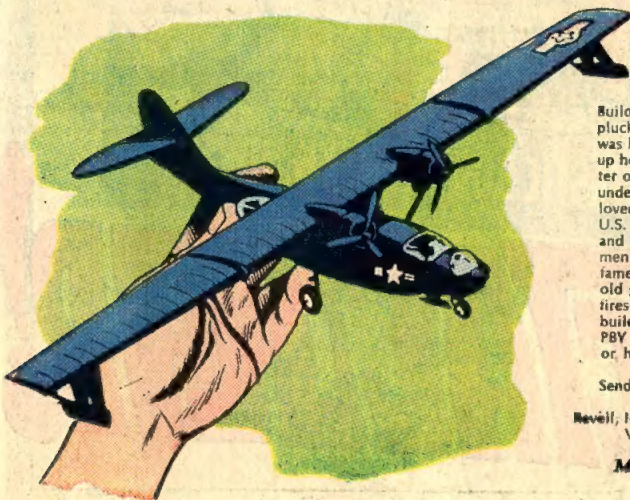
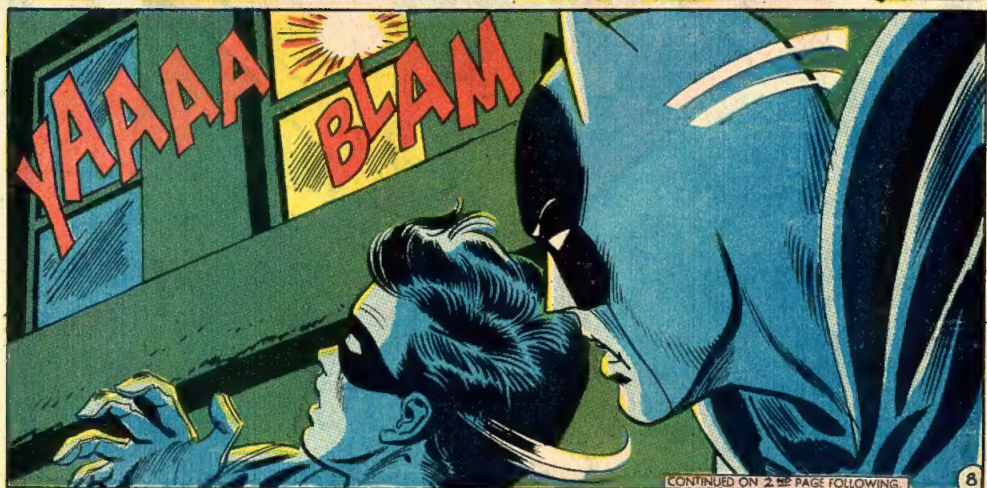


"JUST A FEW DAYS AGO, IN THIS VERY LAB, MEL AND HIS FATHER HAD AN EXTREMELY HEATED ARGUMENT...

BUT THINK OF THE BENEFITS TO MANKIND--

YOU'RE ALL ALIKE! YOU KNOW WHAT THIS WILL REALLY BE USED FOR-- FOR MILITARY PURPOSES, SO THE **U.S.** CAN CONTINUE ITS WARMONGERING!

YOU CALL **WAR** A BENEFIT? I SWEAR, THE PEOPLE AREN'T GOING TO **TAKE** THIS ANY LONGER!



PLUCK

Build her, yourself! She's the plucky Navy PBV, and plucking downed pilots out of the sea during WWII was her specialty. She'd plop down on the water, pick up her boys, and off she'd fly again... all within a matter of seconds and a few hundred feet, and sometimes under direct enemy fire. No wonder so many fliers loved her. She was also the first flying boat to span the U.S. and first to explore unknown regions of the Arctic and New Guinea. And in WWII she laid mines, ferried men and supplies, and was a patrol bomber of the famed Black Cat Squadron. You can't seem to keep the old girl down. Now she's hard at work fighting forest fires! We think you'll learn to love her too, as you build Revell's beautifully authentic model of the classic PBV Catalina. She sells for under \$2.00, wherever toys or hobbies are sold.

Send 35¢ for new 1969 color catalog of Revell kits.
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March, 1969 • Model of the Month
PBV-5A Catalina

SUPER... SPECIAL...

GIANT SUPER 20th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

DC NATIONAL COMICS 25c

JUNE NO. 156

APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY

PETE ROSS: YOU'VE STOLEN MY SUPER-POWERS, MY COSTUME, AND MY SUPER-DOG! I'LL DIE IF YOU LEAVE ME HERE!

TOO BAD, CLARK! NOW I'M GOING TO SMALLVILLE TO STEAL YOUR GIRL, LANA LANG!

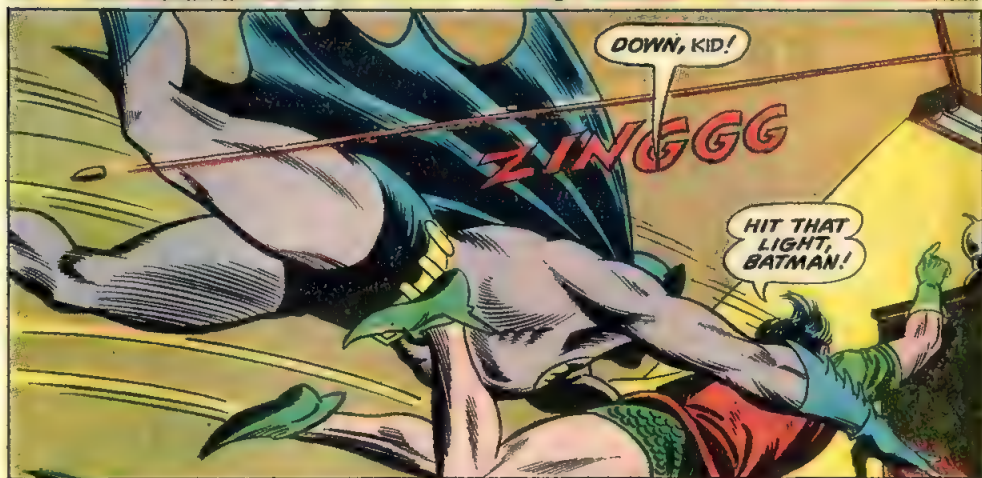
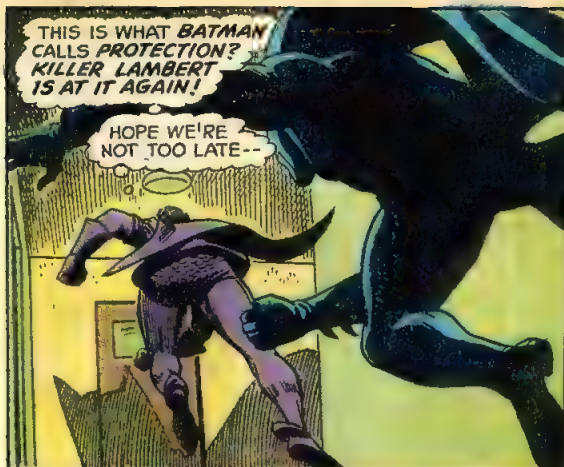
THERE GOES OUR ADOPTED SON - BACK TO ANOTHER PLANET WITH HIS REAL PARENTS!

Featuring **SUPERBOY'S FAREWELL to SMALLVILLE!**

ON SALE MAR. 6

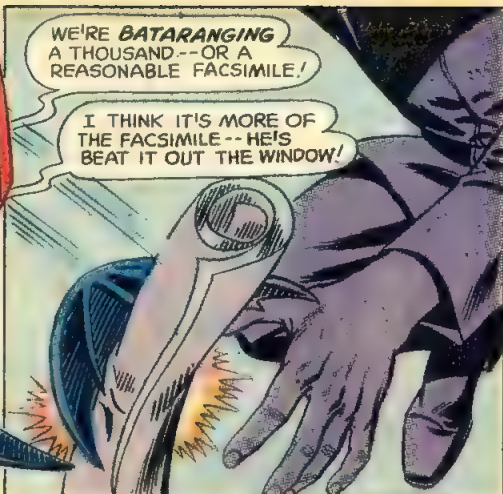
TWO FANTASTIC BOOK-LENGTH NOVELS!

SPECTACULAR!





WELL, I'M
NOT LETTING
HIM CUT OUT
WITHOUT
A TRY--



WE'RE **BATARANGING**
A THOUSAND--OR A
REASONABLE FACSIMILE!

I THINK IT'S MORE OF
THE FACSIMILE--HE'S
BEAT IT OUT THE WINDOW!



AFTER HIM--

WE'D BETTER CHECK ON
CRANE'S CONDITION
FIRST! HE MAY NEED OUR
IMMEDIATE ATTENTION!



H-HE'S A GONER,
BATMAN! CRANE CALLED
THE SHOT ALL RIGHT--
IF YOU'LL ALLOW ME
THE MACABRE PUN!
WE'RE NOT LETTING
MEL LAMBERT GET
AWAY WITH **THIS**
ONE!



WE DELAYED
TOO LONG! MEL'S
SCOOTED OFF--

STILL
JUMPING TO
CONCLUSIONS,
ROBIN--?

RRRAWRR



CONTINUED ON **NEXT** PAGE FOLLOWING

There's a
NEW
EXCITEMENT
about
ADVENTURE
COMING!
ON SALE MARCH 27th.



UNKNOWN TO THE DYNAMIC DUO, THE NERVOUS PAUL ROGERS, HEARING OF LAMBERT'S MURDER, HAS GONE AHEAD TO THE NEIGHBORING LABORATORY OF HIS CO-WORKER, ALFRED STRYKER...

MUST SEE STRYKER! YOUNG LAMBERT MAY COME AFTER US NEXT!

WHO IS IT?

Alfred Stryker
CHEMIST

THIS IS ROGERS!
I MUST SEE YOU!

OKAY-- I'LL
RELEASE THE
ELECTRONIC
LOCK FROM
UP HERE!

THE SHADOWS OF THE INTERIOR DO NOTHING TO CALM ROGERS' FEAR, AS HIS VOICE CRACKS WITH WORRY...

STRYKER?
WHERE ARE
YOU?

BUT HIS WORRIES
ARE JUST
BEGINNING--AS...

UHHH--

FOR WHEN ROGERS COMES TO...

OHH... WH-WHAT
HAPPEN--?



IT IS
YOU!
NO--
DON'T--

STRYKER! STOP
HIM! HE'S GOING
TO KILL--



IT WON'T DO ANY
GOOD TO GET
HYSTERICAL,
ROGERS!

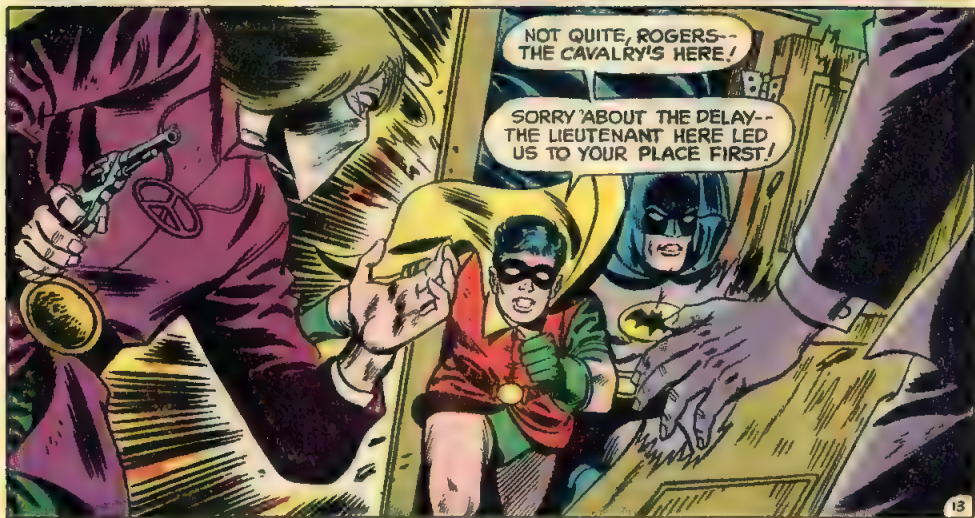
HE HAS ALREADY KILLED
LAMBERT AND CRANE--

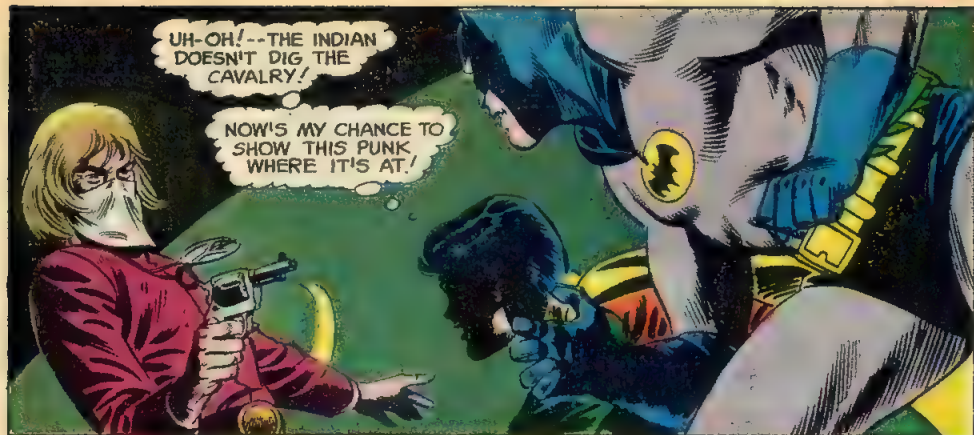
--AND WE
ARE NEXT!

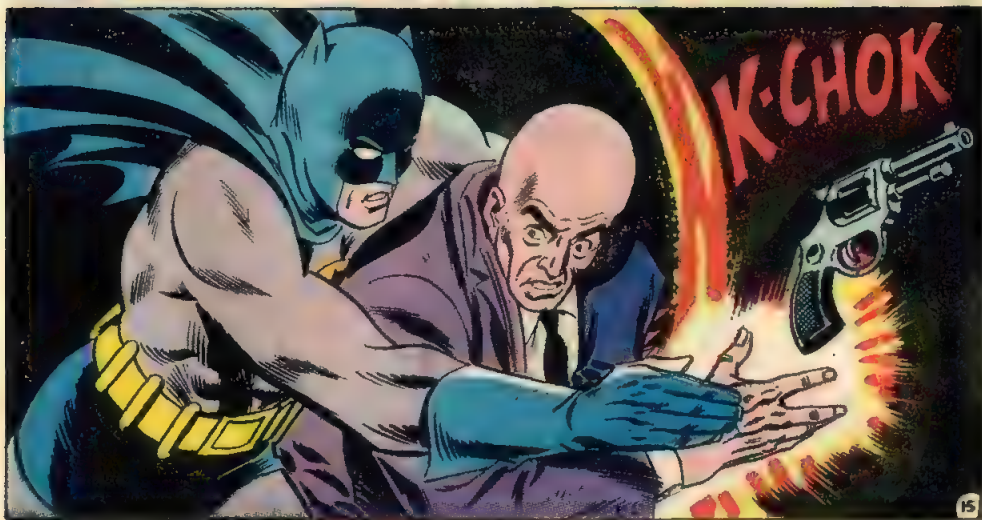
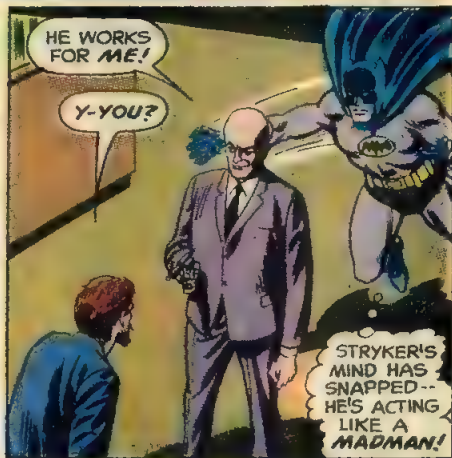


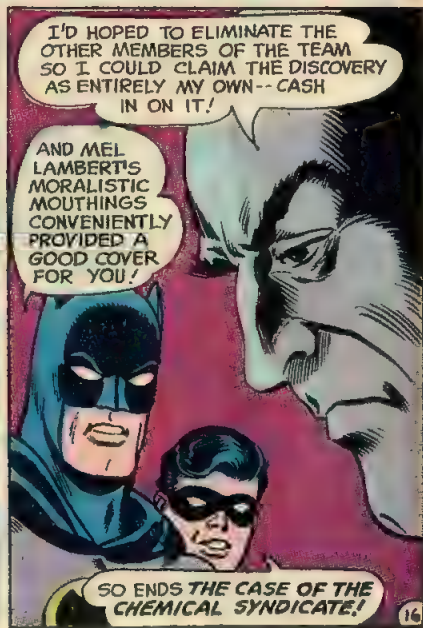
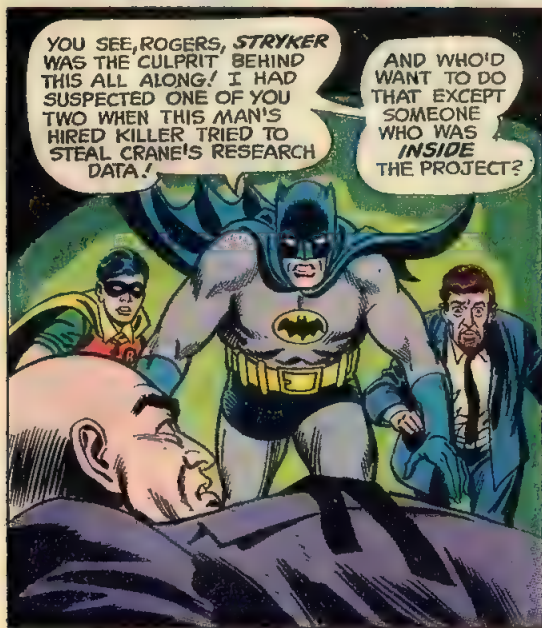
NOT QUITE, ROGERS--
THE CAVALRY'S HERE!

SORRY 'ABOUT THE DELAY--
THE LIEUTENANT HERE LED
US TO YOUR PLACE FIRST!









THE GLEAMING RAYS OF THE SUN BREAK THE NIGHT'S SPELL AS TWO WEARY WARRIORS HEAD HOME...

WHEW! IT'S BEEN A HARD CASE! I'LL BE GLAD TO GET SOME SLEEP!

I'M NOT IN THE MOOD FOR SLEEPING-- I WAS ALL WRONG TONIGHT! I WAS AFTER A GUY WHO WASN'T EVEN INVOLVED-- JUST 'CAUSE HE TURNED OFF PERSONALLY..

AND AT THE SAME TIME...

HMM...IT WAS STRYKER ALL THE TIME!

AND IF IT HADN'T BEEN FOR BATMAN I'D HAVE BEEN TOSSED IN THE CAN, AND I'D PROBABLY STILL BE THERE!

BUT WHAT I CAN'T DIG-- ISN'T BATMAN PART OF THE SYSTEM, TOO?

MAN CONFESSES TO DOUBLE KILLING

I'VE GOT ME SOME HEAV-VY THINKIN' TO DO--

AND IS THAT THE END--OR THE BEGINNING?

MEMO

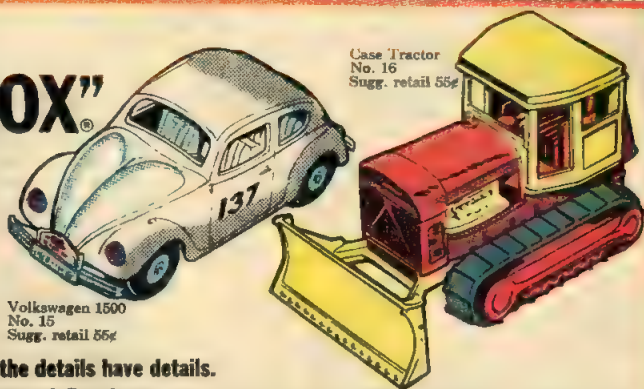
FROM: The Editor
TO: The Reader

Every old-time BATMANIANAC knows of BATMAN'S creation by teen-age BOB KANE!

DC's current teen-age, MIKE FRIEDRICH, updated this issue's yarn from the very first BATMAN story ever published (in DETECTIVE COMICS #27, May, 1939).

As a special 30th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE treat, we reprint this historic BATMAN--beginning on the 2nd page following!

NEW "MATCHBOX" MODELS OF THE MONTH.



Volkswagen 1500
No. 15
Sugg. retail 55¢

Case Tractor
No. 16
Sugg. retail 55¢

On a "MATCHBOX" model even the details have details.

Take a look at the new Volkswagen and Case Tractor. We didn't stop with putting a track on the tractor. We made it move. We made the VW 1500 really authentic. And then went one step further with an extra sporty touch—a Monte Carlo rally plaque. There are new models out all the time. And to really be a "MATCHBOX" expert, write for the free catalogue:

Dear Editor:

Confucius Say: "Never see so pathetic story since Warner Oland get fed up with Keye Luke in 'Charlie Chan in City of Darkness!'"

Good ol' Frank... (Choppy... dialogue)... Robbins... who at this point seems to be rather hung-up on Orientals... has proven once again that you don't have to use your head to write for the comics.

How does one make a Robbins disaster?... Take one thoroughly hackneyed detective story plot (will "pearls-smuggled-in-inside-the-fortune-cookies" do?), several stale old jokes (such as "Help! I'm a prisoner, etc." and "When we... tell it... we just say 'No. 25! Then... everybody break up!')", and the worst Chinamen characterizations this side of Sax Rohmer. Blend the characterizations and plot so that they become engulfed in slam-bang-shoot-em-up type action and so that they have relatively nothing to do with each other. At odd intervals, inject overdoes of the jokes. And, as a final touch, depict the story's protagonists as shallow cardboard cut-outs, virtually devoid of emotion and response. Yield one... perfectly... awful... story!

—MARTIN PASKO, Clifton, N.J.

(Now that we've sampled a selection from Column A, let's partake of two from Column B!—Editor)

Dear Editor:

Although I've been a regular follower of *Batman* from his very first appearance in the May, 1939 *Detective Comics*, I've been a silent *Batmaniac* and refrained from making known my (frequent) likes and (infrequent) dislikes. But now—in time to mark the 30th Anniversary of the *Caped Crusader's* debut, I'm compelled to break my silence and proclaim "The Fortune-Cookie Caper" in *Detective* #383 one of the most enjoyable, refreshing, amusing, suspenseful (adjectives I have not chosen lightly or in haste) *Batman* yarns it's been my good fortune to read.

—George Bell, New York, N.Y.

Dear Editor:

Wow! What an issue! *Detective* #383 to me was just simply great! Bob Brown did a great job on the *Batman* thriller and Gardner Fox's *Elongated Man* yarn was excellent. As for the cover, it was the usual Irv Novick masterpiece (I bet I was the first one in my neighborhood to find Novick's initials under Robin's left arm!).

First, let me piece over the *Batman* tale. Frank Robbins really outdid himself on his *Fortune-Cookie* yarn. He had me really baffled there for a while. I liked seeing *Batman* and *Robin* eat out for a change —and as far as my comic knowledge goes, it's the first time I've seen the *Dynamic Duo* eat out in crime-fighting garb.

As far as the *Elongated Man* adventure goes, it was one of the best of *EM's* in his comparatively short comic-mag career. I sure enjoyed his ductile adventures and am sad to see him leave these pages. I just hope that he will be featured in another comic or star maybe in his own. But please don't send him to the big never-never land in the sky, as far too many comic heroes are already there.

—BRUCE MELLOR, Little Falls, Minn.

Dear Editor:

Costumed villains—NO! That, dear editor, is what I always used to think concerning *Batman's* villain policy. The time was the months of 1966 and early '67, when the *Batman-TV* show was the pop-art rage and *camp* was in the comics instead of mystery and intrigue. I was getting sick of costumed villains like the *Spellbinder*, *Cluemaster*, *Hooded Hangman*, *Outside*, *Killer Moth* and the comical parodies of those two once-great villains, *Joker* and *Penguin*. I wanted to see the *Batman* of the past, patrolling the night streets of *Gotham*, searching out the criminal element and striking with the fearsome force of a gigantic bat from the shadows... ahhh! Yes, this was the *Batman* we, the fans, yearned for, and this is the *Batman* we got in the stories presented in late '67 and throughout the great '68.

Now, horror of horrors, I'm about ready to change my mind. This recent rash of "realistic" crooks, namely two-bit thugs with some kind of cunning gang leader, has made me think twice about gimmicky, powerful villains. Why? Because we all know *Batman* is supposed to be the greatest detective that ever lived, with a fair (!) amount of muscle to back up his convictions. In the stories over the years, our *Cowled Crime-buster* has displayed an almost super-human (but not quite!) reserve of brains and brawn. We all know also that he possesses a mammoth, hyper-scientific *Batcave*-full of flashy computers and crime-fines. He has a spectacular super-revved up car, plane, boat and helicopter at his disposal, not to mention millionaire Bruce Wayne's unlimited funds. Yet, with all this fantastic equipment at his beck and call, along with his intelligent, strong young partner *Robin*, *Batman* continues to high-tail it after unshaven punk thugs in *Gotham* streets and alleyways. When you really think about it, isn't this a bit improbable? I mean with all that sophisticated equipment? Perhaps super-powered villains are closer to *Batman's* competition ken.

With the *Justice League of America*, *Batman's* abilities are often stretched while battling unknown alien powers or mad-power-crazy menaces. In *World's Finest*, *Batman* and *Superman* fight more super-human aliens and masterminds. Then, when he returns to the confines of his own mags, *Batman* wages warfare against these same dirty wharf-rats and loiterers. And he makes it all seem too easy! Perhaps he would get more of a workout against more powerful foes. I don't like over-used gimmicks which criminals like the costumed crooks use. But if the costumes are the only things keeping you from using more ultra-smart and diabolical adversaries, then for heaven's sakes replace the costumes with street clothes. But please keep them villainous enough to present a real mental and physical challenge to our world's greatest crime-buster!

—STEVE BEERY, Alma, Mich.

(To get right to the point, you may have a point about pitting *Batman* against more powerful adversaries—costumed or otherwise. Soooo, next issue marks the riotous return of the *Joker* as "Public Luna-Tic Number One"; followed shortly thereafter by the reappearance of the *Scarecrow* in an ingenious story that simultaneously brings back the "*Batman* of the past... striking with fearsome force!"—Editor)

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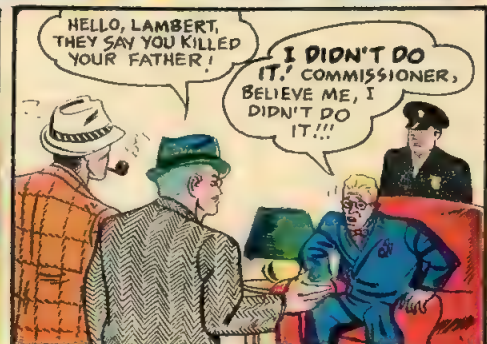
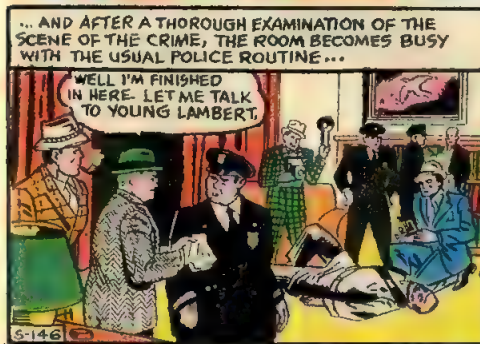
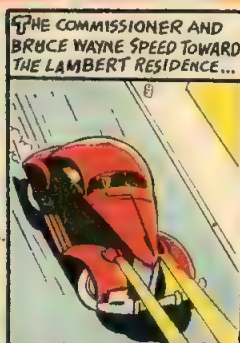
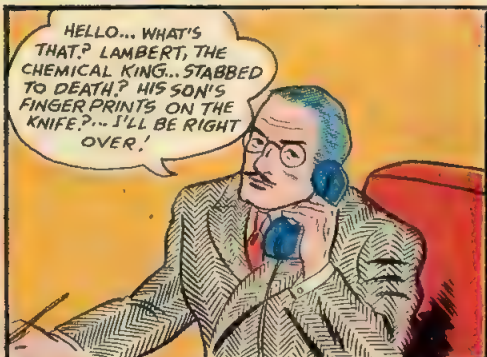
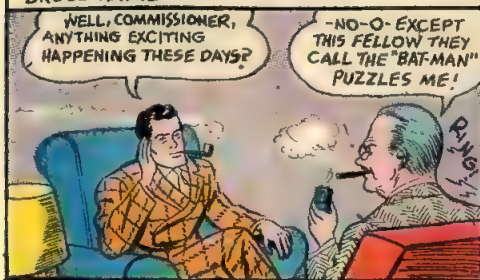
THE BAT-MAN

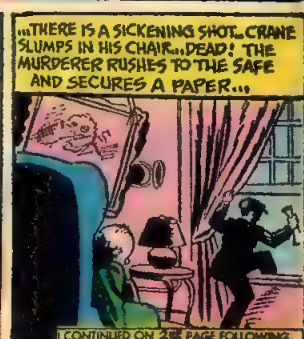
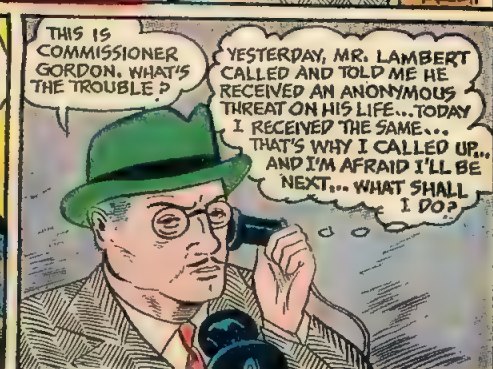
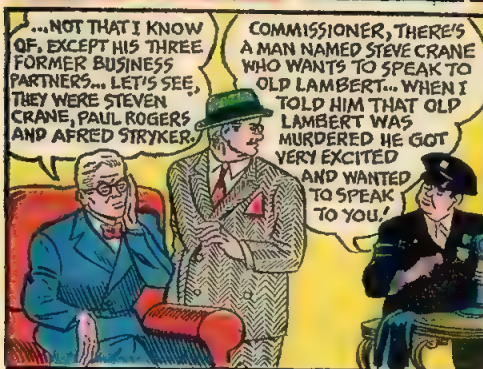
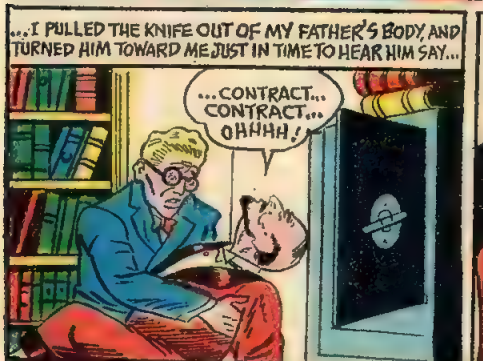
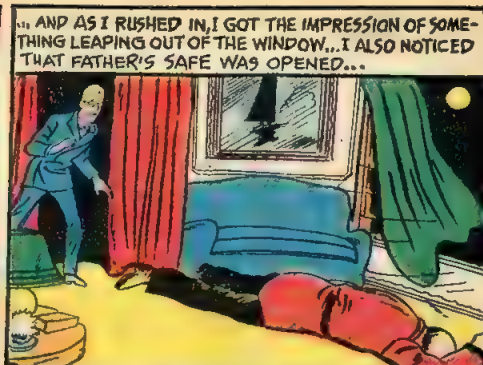
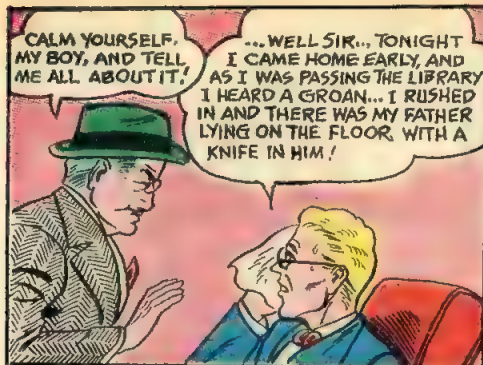
by **Robt Kane**

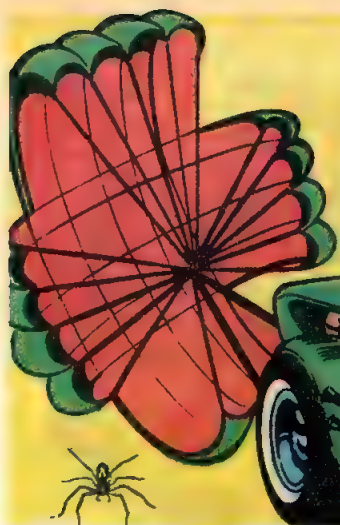
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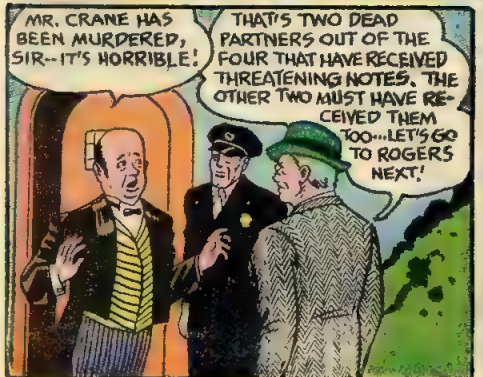
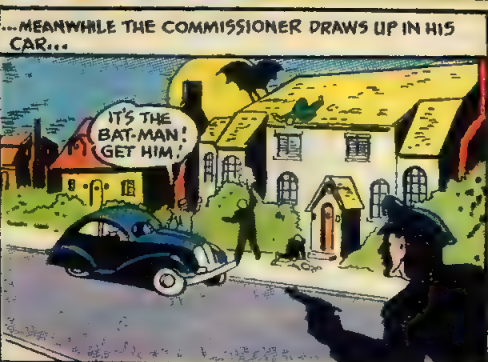
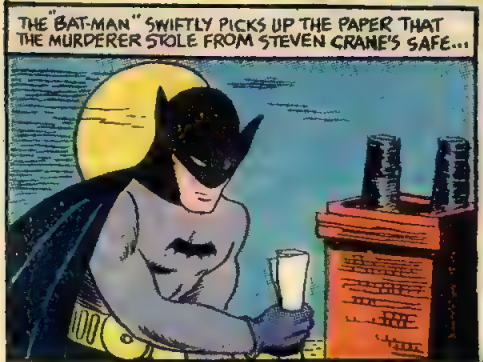
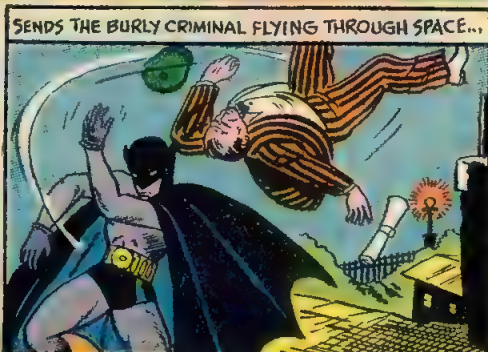


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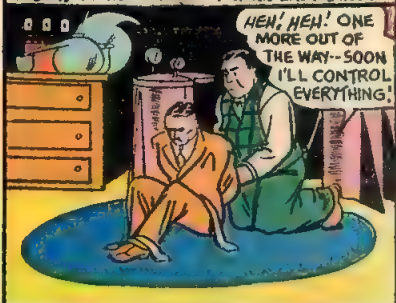
Free Ride
CAROUSEL



...MEANWHILE ROGERS WHO HAS LEARNED OF LAMBERT'S DEATH BY NEWS BROADCAST, HAS ALREADY GONE TO THE NEIGHBORING LABORATORY OF HIS FIRST-WHILE PARTNER, ALFRED STRYKER...



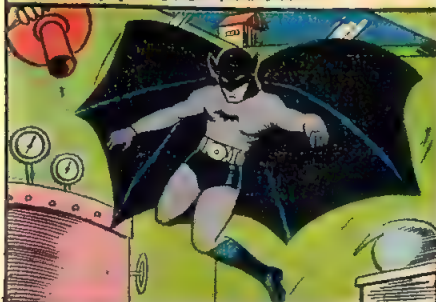
JENNINGS, STRYKER'S ASSISTANT, CARRIES ROGERS TO THE BASEMENT OF HIS LABORATORY...



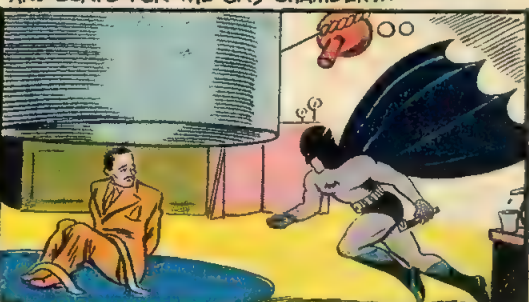
JENNINGS PULLS A BRAKE WHICH STARTS THE GLASS DOWN OVER ROGERS AND CERTAIN DOOM...



...AT THAT MOMENT THE "BAT-MAN" LEAPS THROUGH AN OPEN TRANSOM...



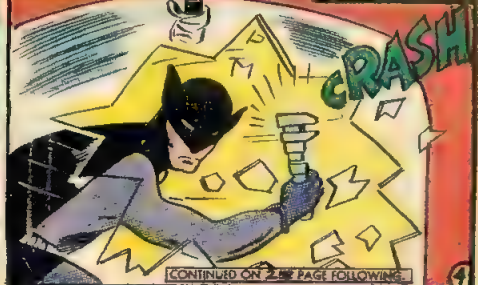
...THE "BAT-MAN" SEIZES A WRENCH FROM A TABLE AND LEAPS FOR THE GAS-CHAMBER...



THE "BAT-MAN" QUICKLY PLUGS THE GAS-JET WITH A HANDKERCHIEF, AS THE GAS CHAMBER DESCENDS ENTIRELY OVER THEM...



...HE THEN UNTIES ROGERS, AND WITH A POWERFUL SWING...



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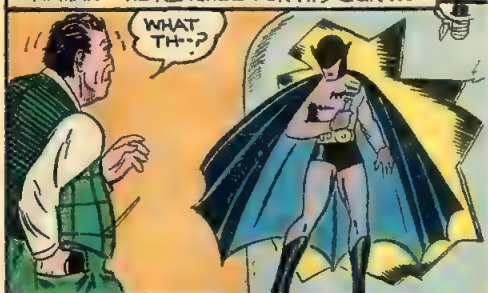
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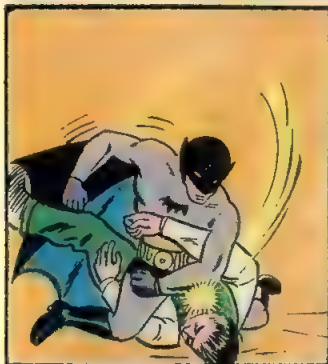
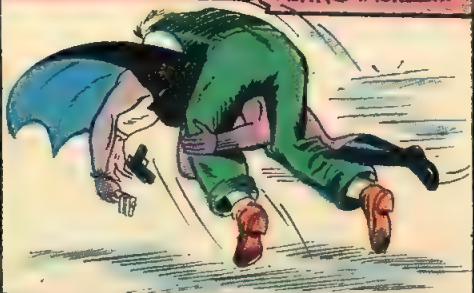
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JENNINGS RETURNS AND IS STARTLED BY THE BAT-MAN ... HE REACHES FOR HIS GUN ...



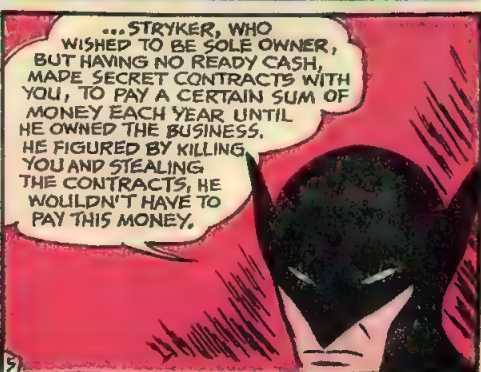
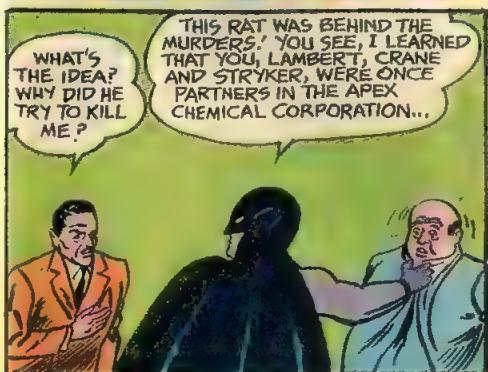
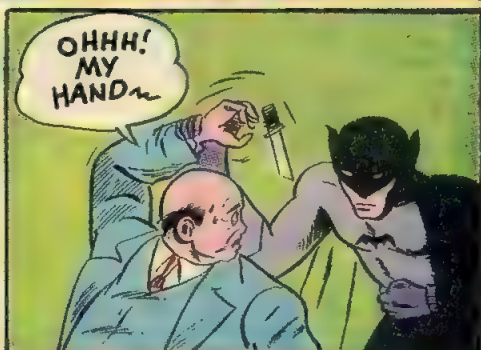
...THE BAT-MAN "GREET'S JENNINGS WITH A FLYING TACKLE...

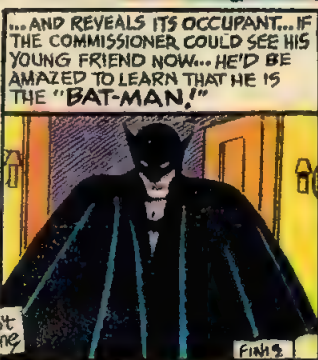
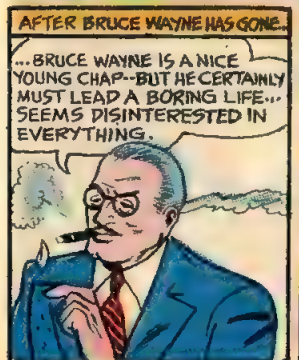
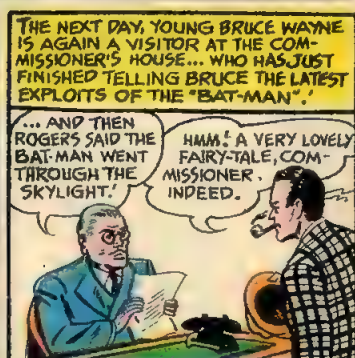
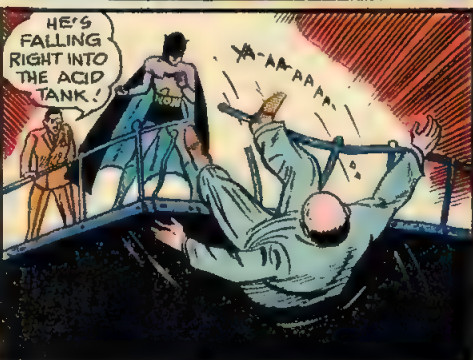
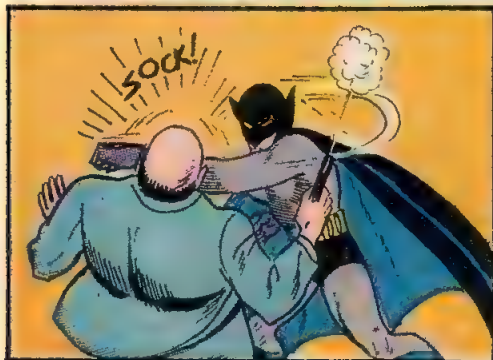
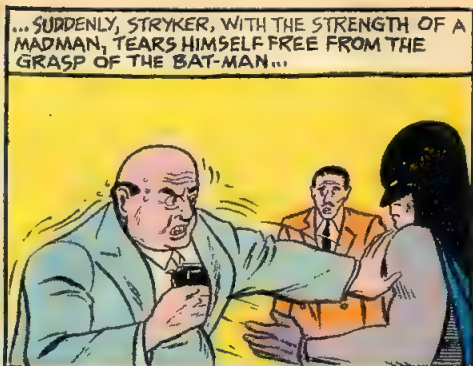
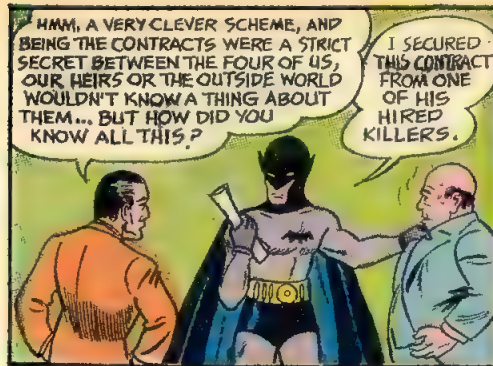


MEANWHILE, ALFRED STRYKER HAS HEARD THE CRASH OF THE GAS-CHAMBER...AS HE ENTERS THE LABORATORY...



HOWEVER, STRYKER HAS NOT NOTICED THE BAT-MAN WHO HAS SECLUDED HIMSELF IN THE SHADOWS...







Detective Comics #27 (May, 1939)

FACT FILE #7

S-138

The comics readers of thirty years ago always could depend upon getting a great buy for their money whenever they picked up on a copy of *Detective Comics*. For more than two years straight it had produced some of the most exciting adventure stories in the still young comics field. In fact, the magazine was the first ever to print all brand-new stories. By the time #27 rolled around, it was solidly established as a reader's favorite.

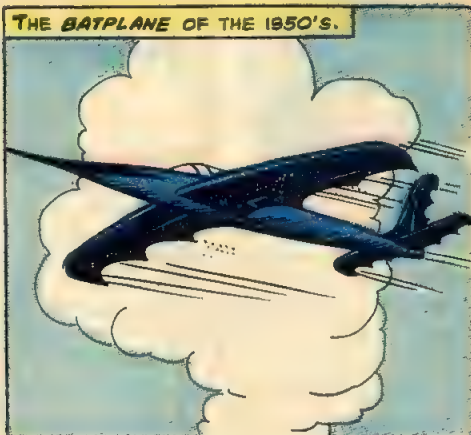
A leading reason for *Detective Comics'* popularity was its regular features. The best known at the time was a character called *Slam Bradley*. Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, the creators of Superman, were the people behind the strip originally and the writer-artist team of the story in #27. The tale begins with *Slam* and his partner *Shorty Morgan*, both private detectives, being run off the side of the road by a hurtling car. Catching up to the reckless driver, *Slam* discovers that he is an escaped killer, "Black Jack" Benson. *Slam* makes short work of recapturing the criminal, but the story is just beginning. The killer escapes from jail with the aid of an accomplice and he is believed to have gone to Switzerland. *Slam* and *Shorty* follow the trail to a ski resort, where they encounter a ski instructor who seems familiar. After a harrowing experience on the slopes, *Slam* is suspicious of the instructor. So one night he follows the instructor as he skis away from the resort. *Slam* and *Shorty* overcome him at a cave, only to be surprised by "Black Jack," who turns out to be the ski instructor's brother. *Slam* and *Shorty* are tied to a toboggan and sent speeding down a mountain-side toward a chasm. At the last instant they fling themselves over and stop their flight. After freeing their bonds, they surprise the criminals and capture them. *Slam Bradley* was a very popular feature that continued until the late 1940's.

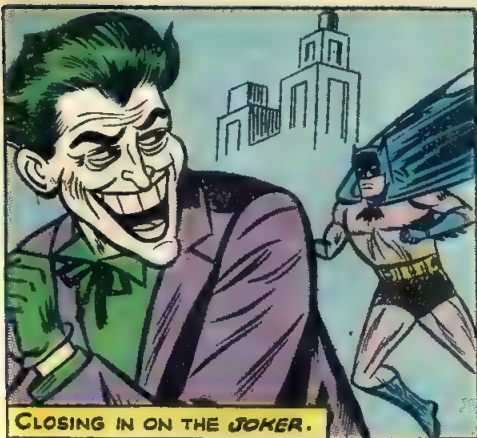
Another strip that was well-received was another Siegel-Shuster series entitled simply "Spy." *Bart Regan* was no *James Bond*, but he always managed to involve himself in some fairly fantastic scheme that threatened our national security. In this particular story in issue #27, two members of a five-man congressional committee suddenly die, apparently of internal injuries. Bart's boss suspects murder and sends him to investigate. While eating lunch with a third congressman, the latter suddenly falls dead, with the same cause of death as the other two. Bart quickly rushes the last remaining congressman into a hotel and registers them under false names. He then begins to pour over old committee files. While doing so, a hobo breaks in and forces Bart to give him his lunch, which Bart gladly allows him to eat anyway. Then the hobo falls dead and Bart realizes that his food was poisoned. He races to the congressman's hotel room and searches their food. He discovers a miniature

bomb that had a covering that would dissolve in the stomach and explode, killing whomever had taken it. Back at his apartment, Bart has two visitors who say they have come to question him about the hobo's death. He goes with them, expecting to clear himself with their superiors, only to find that they are fakes who really are working for the man behind the murders. However, in a bit of quick thinking, Bart turns the tables on his captor and the villain falls victim to his own destructive device. Back at headquarters, Bart's boss remarks, "You certainly cleaned up that case pronto!", to which Bart merely replies, "That's old stuff—bring on another case!" Bart's career as "Spy" continued until the end of World War II.

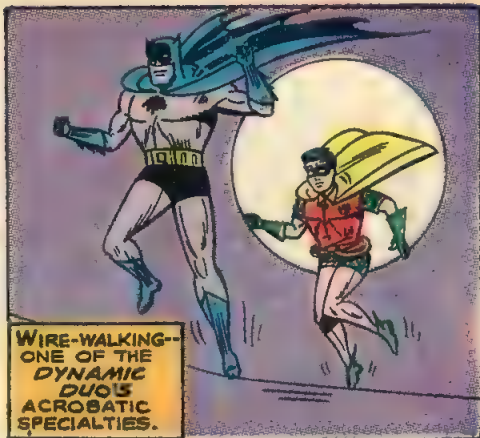
Slam Bradley and *Spy*, of course, were not the only strips in the *Detective Comics* issues of those days. There was also featured *Speed Saunders*, another ace investigator, who in issue #27 solved the Red Crescent murders of the "Killers of Kurdistan." Then *Buck Marshall*, a Western range detective, solved the murder of a cowboy in "Bullet Bluff." The *Crimson Avenger*, a popular costumed hero in later years, appeared as a *Shadow-type* investigator in his strip. Other minor fillers completed the issue. The old-timers in the audience will remember *Cosmo*, *The Phantom of Disguise* . . . *Plain Clothes Pete* . . . *Flatfoot Flannigan* . . . *Bruce Nelson* . . . not to mention the well-done adaptations of Sax Rohmer's *Dr. Fu Manchu*.

Naturally the main event of *Detective Comics* #27 was the first appearance of *The Batman*. This classic first story is now being featured in the 30th anniversary celebration for *Batman* in the May *Detective Comics*. Bob Kane and Bill Finger combined to produce a character that fit right into the *Detective Comics* bag but changed the entire direction of the magazine and of the comics industry itself. Here was a character which operated as a detective, solving the murderous crimes of the day, as did most of the other features in the book. However, there was an added development. The cat (or should I say bat?) had the very essence of mystery surrounding him. With his dark costume and ever-mysterious appearances and disappearances, he seemed to personify the image of the perfect detective. Comics were never the same afterwards. And *Detective Comics* was never the same again, either. The continuing success of *Batman* led to other costumed characters in the magazine throughout the years: *Air Wave*, *Crimson Avenger*, *Robotman*, *Jonn Jonzz*, *Elongated Man*. Today *Batman* shares what has now become "his" *Detective Comics* with his fellow Bat-characters, *Robin the Boy Wonder* and *Batgirl*.

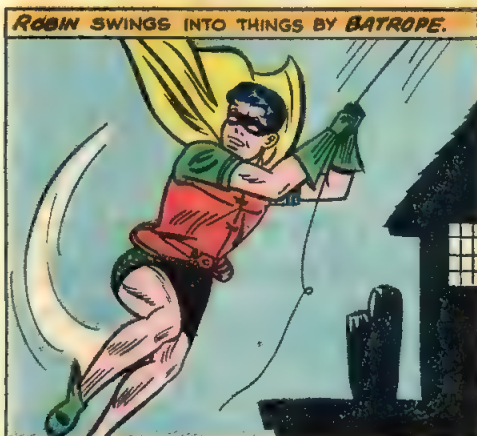




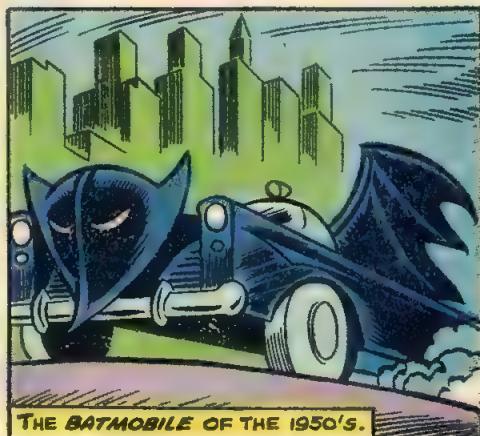
CLOSING IN ON THE JOKER.



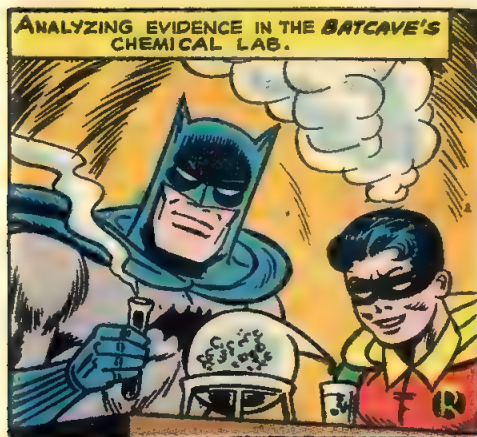
**WIRE-WALKING--
ONE OF THE
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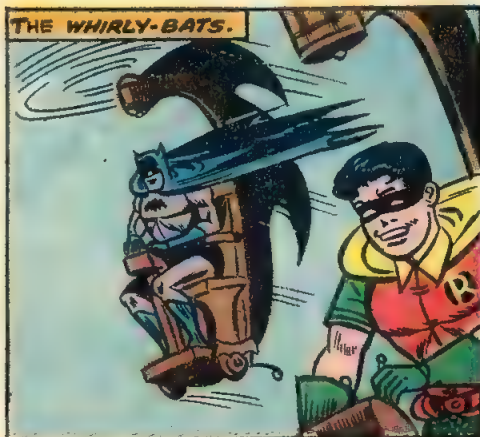
ROBIN SWINGS INTO THINGS BY BATROPE.



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